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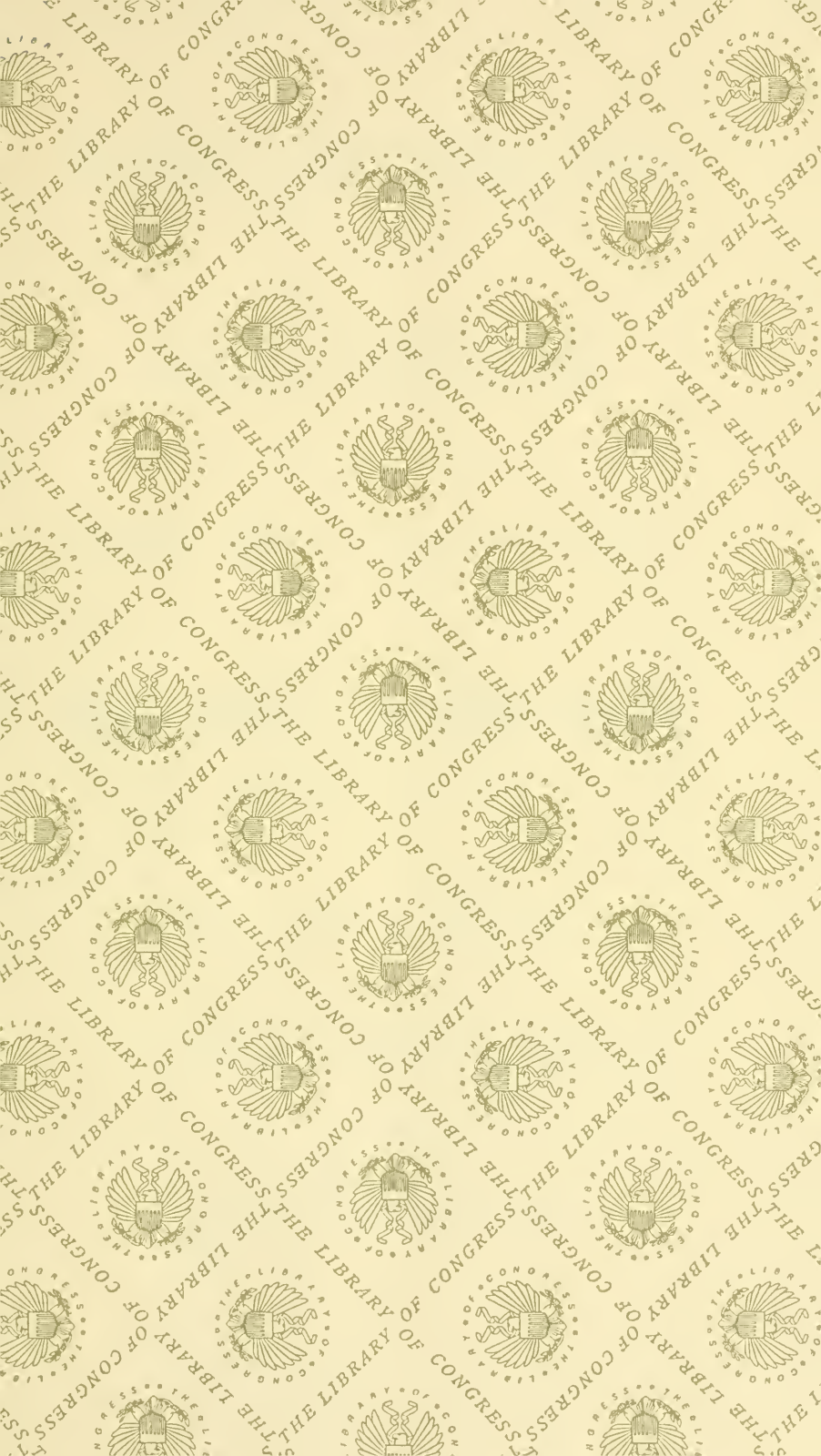
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The Hand of God in American History.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN THE

Baptist Church, Keeseville, N. Y.,

JULY 7, 1861;

ALSO BEFORE THE UNITED

LITERARY SOCIETIES OF NEW HAMPTON INSTITUTION,

FAIRFAX, VT., JULY 15, 1861.

BY

✓
REV. JOHN F. BIGELOW.

“He hath not so dealt with any Nation.”

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KEESEVILLE, July 10, 1861.

Rev. J. F. BIGELOW :

Dear Sir—We, the undersigned, having listened with very great satisfaction to your able and instructive discourse of last Sabbath evening, on the *War Crisis*, and being desirous that it may have a very general circulation, most respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

Respectfully yours,

H. A. HOUGHTON,	SILAS ARNOLD,	L. L. SCRIBNER,
J. D. KINGSLAND,	O. KEESE, Jr.,	J. N. MACOMBER,
CHARLES THOMAS,	A. B. KINGSLAND,	WILLIS MOULD,
C. C. BINGHAM,		

NEW HAMPTON INSTITUTION, }
FAIRFAX, VT., July 18, 1861. }

Rev. J. F. BIGELOW :

Dear Sir—At a meeting of the United Societies, on motion of Mr. L. B. Hibbard,

Voted, That we present Rev. J. F. Bigelow, of Keeseville, N. Y., our thanks for his *able* and *appropriate* address, delivered before us July 15, 1861, and request the publication of the same.

W. C. GUNN, } Secretaries.
L. B. STEELE, }

NOTE.

Having received the above requests that the following Discourse on the *Hand of God in American History* should be published, it is accordingly given to the Press. Though deeply conscious of the deficient manner in which it is presented, yet I cannot but think that the Theme is one, at this time, of momentous importance. It takes a point of view from which, at this crisis, I would that all our citizens should contemplate our national affairs.

JOHN F. BIGELOW,
Pastor of the Baptist Church,
Keeseville, N. Y.

DISCOURSE.

If we look into the *History* of Nations, we shall find that not a few of them supposed themselves to be the *special favorites* of Divine Providence. If we inquire also into the state of national feeling, as it now exists in different countries, we shall find, in numbers of them, no lack of *present* evidences of the same assumption.

I hardly need to say, so obvious is the truth, that in general the source of such an impression has been and is, an overweening national vanity. Were it necessary to furnish illustrations of this feeling, we could point not only to Ancient Greece and Rome, whose real superiority might be some justification of their exalted self-estimate; but we could point to the line of the proud Pharaohs, and to almost every Asiatic nation, whether of the past or of the present, particularly to China and Japan, whose matchless conceit utters itself in grandiloquence most pompously and ineffably absurd; we could point to the subjects of the Russian Autocrat, to the valorous but boastful sons of Gaul and Britain, and find in each of these examples of national arrogance. Nor are these all; if the statements of Historians and Travellers are to be credited, we could refer to some of even the most inconsiderable and abject tribes, and find among them specimens of vain-glory as inordinate, and of self-conceit as supercilious as are anywhere to be found. Entertaining such exaggerated views

of its own importance, it is but natural that each of these nations should regard itself as a special object of Providential interest, and therefore as possessing a *special* History.

That the Jews regarded *their* history as peculiar and even unparalleled, is evident because they said so : "He hath not so dealt with any nation." Nor will any one, who is acquainted with the *facts* of their history, regard such a view, on their part, as an assumption. Does the story of other nations tell of remarkable events, of hairbreadth escapes, of wonderful deliverances, of daring exploits and grand achievements? The annals of the Israelites relate those, the equal of which veritable history nowhere else records, and which the most romantic legend has hardly surpassed.

In the case of the *American* people, as in that of the Jews, we believe that it is no dictate of national vanity, when we claim that God has given us a history *unique* and *peculiar* : when we claim that "He hath not so dealt with any nation."

Accordingly the subject, on which I propose to address you at this time is, *the Hand of God in American History*.

I. In the first place, let me point you to some of the *manifestations* and *developements* of peculiar Providential agency in our historical career.

1. At the outset, one illustration of God's Providence working in our history, and one which should not be overlooked, I find in the character and peculiarities of the country to which our ancestors were conducted, and which, as a nation, we occupy.

No one, who is at all acquainted with the labors of Ritter, Humboldt, Guyot and others in the department of physical study, will fail to recognize the relations of Geography to History ; no such one, we think, will doubt, that

the structure of Continents has an important part to perform in the education and developement of nations. Divine Providence has assigned to every historical-people a special geographical locality, thus determining "the bounds of their habitation." As it was therefore with the great Empires of the East, as it was in later days with Greece and Rome, as it is now with the nations of modern Europe, so have *we* received a geographical position appropriate to our character and historical functions as a People. Accordingly it was not an inconsiderable island like England or Ireland, which God had prepared as the refuge and home of the exiled Puritans. It was not some pent-up nook of Europe already occupied, and even *swarming* with nations, where they would be hemmed in by jealous and encroaching neighbors. It was not a country like Switzerland, to which God sent our ancestors; a country which, though beautiful by its sweet valleys, and sublime by its Alps and Glaciers, is nevertheless limited in extent, surrounded on all sides by dominant nations, and without outlet to the sea, by which, through commerce and navigation, it could go forth to influence the world. It was not to such as these, but to a widely extended continent, which, however it may have been visited by Scandinavian navigators in distant centuries, was kept hidden from the civilized world until the close of the fifteenth century; God thus preserving it from the occupancy of rapacious gold-seekers, adventurous Colonists and ambitious Kings; it was, to a continent possessing an adapted soil and climate, a land rich in vegetable productions and mineral resources; it was to a land whose coast is indented with numerous bays and harbors, thus fitting it for foreign commerce, and whose broad lakes and long rivers afford the most extensive facilities for inland navigation; it was to a country exhibiting every variety of natural as-

pect, from the wildest mountain scenery to the most pleasing rural landscape ; to a country stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the frigid regions of the British Provinces in the north, to the sunny plains of Mexico in the south ; to a country of which large portions are so fertile, that it may be called the *garden* of the world ; while the principal part of the remainder yields to labor, bringing forth, by skilful cultivation, abundantly, or at least sufficiently, for all the exigences of a vigorous, working population ; it was to a country furnishing facilities to the frugal, industrious and energetic, and it ought to furnish them to no others, for almost every kind of business and pursuit, agricultural, manufacturing and commercial ; it was to one whose “ characteristic is simplicity, unity,”* the last of the “ three historical continents ;” it was to a land forming an indivisible domain, “ where all the peoples of Europe may meet together with room enough to move in, may commingle their efforts and their gifts, and carry out upon a scale of grandeur hitherto unknown, the life-giving principle of modern times, the principle of free association.”

Such is the country to which Divine Providence led our forefathers in order to plant this great nation.

Nor was it unwittingly and blindly that he conveyed them here. It was to such a country that he led them, a land so ample, so distinguished by natural advantages that our people might be, to a great degree, independent or self-dependent ; that our population might be numerous ; that it might be in the main homogeneous ; that our nationality might be bold, strong and influential ; that our numerous citizens, occupying one compact and connected territory, might be formed under the same influences ; that they might live under the same government and institu-

*Guyot's Earth and Man. Page 297.

tions, both civil and religious; and that thus living on one connected soil, and thus subjected to one class of influences, instead of being dispersed as distant and dissimilar provincials, they might become essentially component parts of one great social and political unity. Had our population been scattered in remote dependences, or had that population been numerically small, we should have had neither the assimilated character nor the aggregate substance for strong national influence. God then has given us an ample and consolidated country, for in numbers and identity of character, are to be found the materials and forces of our national power, political and moral.

2. Another developement of God's Providence, as dealing peculiarly with our nation, is to be found in the *Colonial period* of its history.*

God is in history, and he who fails to discover Him in it, does not read it rightly: does not seize and appreciate its true spirit. To *prove* these statements is no part of my work at this time, for I regard myself as speaking not to skeptics, but to believers[†] in the doctrine of Divine Providence. I repeat then, God through Christ is in all history; and He is in it working out great *principles*. At every evolution He exhibits some important truth; He is in it all, advancing the great objects of human good and His own glory.

I do not mean to say, however, that the process of historical developement proceeds directly forward without interruption. I do not mean to say that the stream of history flows ever onward, encountering no obstacles, describing no meandering movements. Temporary suspensions there *may* be, or at least they *appear* to be. Such an *apparent* suspension there was of the great developement

*This division of the discourse, from the lateness of the hour, was omitted at Fairfax.

ment of history in the mediæval Ages. During this long period there was little *apparent* advancement. God's purposes, however, even *then*, were doubtless advancing towards their maturity, though by a *hidden* process; and that period, as well as previous and succeeding ones, subserved, without doubt, *some* end in the far-reaching economy of His designs; just as winter with all its snow, ice and cold is conducive to vegetation. Though there is the *outward* semblance of death, Nature is not then dead nor inactive; she is elaborating those juices, and going forward with those processes that are essential to the beauty and verdure of the following spring. Accordingly there is reason to believe that the winter of the dark Ages was not totally lost time as regards the prosecution of God's great purposes in human history.

The argument, moreover, is not one from analogy merely. That this period *had* its uses, however dreary and barren it may seem to us, is probable also because the human mind was not then torpid. Though seemingly fruitless in *important* results, yet its action was oftentimes intense. Do you inquire for the proof of this? you have only to study the history of scholasticism; you have only to feel the mental pulse of such men as Peter Lombard, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and William Occam; you have only to witness that sturdy, intellectual gladiatorship, which appears in the contests of the Nominalists and Realists. Though their philosophy may be characterized and perhaps justly as "scholastic subtilty" and "scholastic trifling," yet there was in it intense thinking. Nor was that thinking merely abstract and metaphysical, it was practical and religious. Tendencies had long been astir, looking to a new order of things. As the dawn comes before the day, announcing and ushering it in; as some mild days precede the spring softening the

rigors of winter and preparing for the vernal change, so the Reformation had its precursors and preparatives. Ullmann, indeed, has given the christian world a history of the "Reformers before the Reformation."

By and by, however, the "fulness of time" had come, and the scene changes. Borrowing the idea of Schægler, when Nominalism had separated thought from being, and divorced the theological from the practical, then the religious consciousness of the age *broke* with the traditional dogma, which *rupture* constituted the Reformation. The long winter of Mediæval Scholasticism and Catholicism broke up when the spring of the Reformation, previously heralded, actually came. Then the ice and snow melted away, or rather much of it melted, for it is sad to see, that, on the soil of the Reformation, one encounters still not unfrequent masses of traditional ice, which the sun of Protestantism has not yet dissolved. At the Reformation, however, the human mind, so long comparatively stationary, started forward by a surprising progress. Yet that progress, great as it was, was far in the rear of the point which has been reached by the Christian civilization of to day.

The Reformation dates back almost to the period when Columbus discovered the new world. Luther had discovered, too, a *new world* in Theology; and these two events, the most important in modern times, are intimately connected in their bearings upon American history. The God of Providence had thus connected them, in order to bring out, according to His own plan, the development of His purposes.

Yet, though the Reformation was thus early in its occurrence, and thus important in its character, it did not, as already intimated, reach its present stage of advancement until after the tardy lapse of years. The steps of

constitutional liberty have always been slow, because its course has always been an up-hill one. Long was it before the idea of complete religious freedom was attained. Hence, even down to the latter half of the seventeenth century, we find the Church of England publishing the acts of uniformity, thus driving from her bosom hundreds and thousands of the best of her sons, both Ministers and Laymen. It is only to indicate the spirit of the age, and not for purposes of sectarian depreciation, that we allude to this fact.

The Reformation, however, was destined to advance a *second step*, appearing under a *purser* form, and on a different soil. To escape from religious intolerance, a body of English Dissenters, reproachfully termed Puritans, were seen flying first to Holland, and then to these American shores, which Providence, by means of the Genoese navigator, had opened just before the dawn of the Reformation, as a theatre on which to make a new development of the christian and social economy. God had prepared this western wilderness as an asylum for liberty and religion, escaping from the persecution and oppression of the Old World. Thus exiled and escaping, Divine Providence watched and guided their flight. He preserved the Mayflower in her perilous passage. At length He gave to that intrepid company upon her deck, to land upon the rock of Plymouth. By means of a pestilence, which had cut off large numbers of the aboriginal inhabitants, He had already prepared a place for them, to which the friendly Samoset bade them welcome. Winter reigned with its stern rigors. Sickness and death were abroad in their ranks. Carver, chosen before they landed, to be their Governor, was, together with his sons and wife, already in his grave. A Historian of the Colony tells us that, "at one time, every person in the settlement except seven, was on a sick bed." Withal, the hostility of the

savages hourly threatened their destruction ; for, although the Wampanoags entered into a friendly treaty with them, the Narragansetts looked upon them as intruders. In token of the doom which they might expect, Canonicus sends to Badford, the successor of Carver, a bundle of arrows wrapped in a rattle-snake's skin.

Under circumstances such as these, what could there be before them, but speedy destruction ? To the human eye, what prospect could be gloomier ? What other dark prognostic is needed to foreshadow their fate ? Yet strange to say all auguries fail here ; all principles of human calculation, for once, prove false. And why ? because God's Providence comes in among them disturbing and arranging to suit its own ends. That little band of Pilgrims are preserved because God has great uses to make of them in future history. Hence neither cold nor sickness nor starvation were permitted utterly to waste them, nor the savages to cut them off. Though by these destroying agents their numbers were greatly thinned, yet God did not suffer them to become extinct. Through these Puritans He intended to realize, in the form of permanent institutions, ideas of religion and government which the majority of mankind but imperfectly understood, which they were poorly prepared to appreciate, and which they were but little disposed to promote, but which, being essential to the true development of humanity, were wrapped up in the Divine purposes. A decade of years passed on ; Salem, Charlestown, Dorchester, Roxbury, Watertown, Cambridge and Boston, are settled ; trade is opening with the mother country ; the foundations of a permanent Colony are laid.

Such is the beginning of our national history. It was the Puritanic element, which supplied the characteristic spirit in our civilization. True it is that as early as 1607, a settlement was formed in Virginia ; but it was not of a

material fit for use in God's plan of American History. Says Bancroft, "it was not the will of God that the new State should be formed of such material; that such men should be the fathers of a progeny born on the American soil, who were one day to assert American liberty by their eloquence and defend it by their valor." About the time, however, of the landing of the Pilgrims, the Virginia Colony had so changed in *substance*, that it was adapted to become an organic part of our historical development. The population of New Netherlands, New Sweden and Pennsylvania either was already sufficiently assimilated, or soon became enough so to enter, as constituent elements, into our American Nationality.

Looking back now over the century that had elapsed since 1517, and calling to mind the state of things then existing in Europe, we see that encouraging progress had indeed been made. Still some of those principles, which began to be evolved at the time of Luther, had as yet been but very imperfectly wrought out. Among these was that of religious Liberty. Should any of my observations at this point seem to detract a little from the full meed of praise sometimes given to the Puritans, I need only to reply, that they were men of a style of character so rich in noble qualities and manly virtues, that they can *afford* the statement of whatever deficiencies appeared in them, better perhaps than any class of men, of which history informs us. Some panegyrists of theirs have seemed to think it necessary to defend them from every possible charge of defect, fearing that otherwise their reputation will suffer; but they need not such defenders. The Puritans were men, if there are any such, whose reputation will take care of itself.

Much was gained for religious Liberty, when Luther first "broke" with the traditional dogmatism of the Papal Church: much was gained again when the Puritans "broke"

with the Churchly authority, which they had left in England. A third "break" was now needed; and it was one with themselves. The principle of religious Liberty remaining still in a backward state, required a clear elimination and a decisive statement. To effect this there must be another exodus from religious intolerance, not indeed across an ocean: not to a *foreign* shore; but from one portion of our American soil to another. The man to meet this emergency was Roger Williams: a man of noble type, of singular magnanimity, of conscientious firmness, of intrepid spirit, and though not without his defects, yet of remarkable breadth and vigor of moral and intellectual character, and in some respects entitled to stand as the foremost man of his time. For the sake of freedom to follow the course of his earnest and independent convictions of religious duty, he must fly from Massachusetts into the depths of the wilderness. After many perils escaped, after many privations and sufferings endured, after fourteen weeks of forest wanderings through the snows of a hard winter, "not knowing what bread or bed did men," yet watched by the eye, and guided and girded by the hand of that Providence, which was fitting him for his work, he became, in 1636, the Founder of the State of Rhode Island.

Thus this Pioneer of religious Liberty established that Commonwealth, which, first of all the Governments on the face of the globe, furnished an example of unconditional toleration in matters of Religion. Thus he realized, for the first time, that grand idea—the freedom of religious opinion,—the carrying out of which has not been the sole distinction of the State where it originated, but in respect to the rest of the world, has become the peculiar glory of the country of which that little State forms territorially so inconsiderable a part. The eye that sees no indications of a Divine Providence working in these historical developments is one which, though it can "discern the face of the sky,"

cannot "discern the signs of the times." So deeply was Roger Williams impressed with such an Agency in his affairs, that, in recognition of it, the settlement which he had just founded he called Providence.

The germs of the National life already begin to appear; the tree of Liberty is taking root. Harvard College was soon instituted, "which exerted a powerful influence in forming the early character of the country"; and in respect to which, since it was the first educational expression of the Nation's intellectual spirit, of which our many other honored Colleges and Literary Institutions are also a product, they might say, without any self-detraction, she is "the Mother of us all." The foundation of our Common School system was soon laid "to the end," in the language of the Puritans, "that learning might not be buried in the graves of their forefathers." It was ordered in all the Colonies "that every township, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall appoint one to teach all children to write and read."* An American Literature, to-day, by no means limited in amount, nor contemptible in quality, had its origin among those earliest sources of our History. Says Bancroft: "The Press began its work in 1639." Then arose that system of Legislation, which, though not always broad in its principles, nor wise in its policy, did much in moulding the national character, and which subsequently developed itself into the form of our free Government and free Institutions.

Thus do we see Divine Providence planting the seeds of this great Nation in the *establishment* of the Colonies; and evidences equally clear of its working, do we find in their subsequent *growth* and *preservation*. I may not dwell upon the hostility of the savages, surrounding them, and the frequent attacks from that source, which they were

*Bancroft, Vol. I, page 458.

enabled to resist and suppress; for the lack of time forbids the delay; but I cannot forbear an allusion to a still more imminent peril from which they were preserved, I mean that of the threatened domination of the French and subjection to the power of the Pope. Had our forefathers failed here, how different would have been the whole course of American History. Who can estimate what, in that event, would have been the political, the intellectual and the moral differences? Especially, may we ask, who can conceive what would have been the *religious* difference. Instead of a free Protestant religion and a free Church, we should have had a Roman hierarchy, with all its direful concomitants and consequents,—a State Church, a corrupt priesthood and an ignorant people. French Jesuits were ever busy, seeking to stir up the Indians to whet the knife and the tomahawk for the destruction of the Colonists. The French had a strong cordon of forts and defences, extending from Nova Scotia and the banks of the St. Lawrence by Champlain and the Western Lakes, down the Ohio and the Mississippi, to Texas; and more than once, to the human eye, seemed likely to overrun the whole country. What murders they ruthlessly committed, what desolations they wrought on our unprotected frontiers, what wars they waged to obtain the object of their rapacious desires, our bloody Colonial History, in sad detail, full well informs us. It tells us of King William's war, of Queen Anne's war, of King George's war, of the French and Indian war.

Our narrow limits will allow no reference to the particular events of these dark struggles beyond the mention of a case noticed by Dr. Dwight, and cited by the writer of an admirable article in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, as illustrating the "Relation of Divine Providence to Physical Laws."* Dr. Dwight adduced it as an exemplification of Providen-

*We presume that the author is Prof. Park.

tial interference in answer to prayer. The case is that of the destruction of the French Armament under the Duke D'Anville in the year 1746, and which, he adds, "ought to be remembered with gratitude and admiration by every inhabitant of this country. This fleet consisted of forty ships of war: was destined for the destruction of New England: was of sufficient force to render that destruction in the ordinary progress of things certain; and sailed from Chebucto, in Nova Scotia, for that purpose."* The writer of the article above alluded to proceeds to quote as follows from the "History of the Old South Church, Boston." "In the mean time," adds Dr. Wisner, "our pious fathers, apprized of their danger, and feeling that their only safety was in God, had appointed a season of fasting and prayer, to be observed in all their Churches. While Mr. Prince was officiating [in the Old South Church of Boston, says a writer in the *Columbian Sentinel* of 1821,] on this fast day, and praying most fervently to God, to avert the dreaded calamity, a sudden gust of wind arose (the day had, till now, been perfectly clear and calm) so violent as to cause a loud clattering of the windows. The reverend pastor paused in his prayer; and looking around upon the congregation with a countenance of hope, he again commenced, and with great devotional ardor supplicated the Almighty to cause *that wind* to frustrate the object of our enemies, and save the country from *Conquest and Popery*. A tempest ensued, in which the greater part of the French fleet was wrecked on the coast of Nova Scotia. The Duke D'Anville, the principal General, and the second in command *both committed suicide*. Many died with disease, and thousands were consigned to a watery grave. The small number who remained alive, returned to France without health, and without spirits. And the enterprise

*Theology, Vol. V, Page 40.

was abandoned, and never again resumed.”* The author of our article says in relation to this, and we concur in his view, “that the destruction of property and life was an answer to prayer, that the rising of any particular wave of the sea, or particular “gust of wind” was the result of a particular supplication therefor, we need not be confident; but that the *safety* of the Lord’s heritage in New England, which was the supplicated favor, was vouchsafed in compliance with the supplication, we may rationally believe. The analogies of Divine Providence warrant the belief.

3. Another field for the exemplification of God’s Providence, as acting and guiding in our Nation’s affairs, is to be found in the *Revolutionary Period* of our History.

I am not about to discuss the somewhat casuistical principle of political revolutions. While, however, I accept firmly the scriptural doctrine that Government is an Institution of God, and therefore for no slight causes is to be overthrown, or even resisted; yet at the same time I believe just as firmly, that it is possible for a Government to reach a stage of abuses so aggravated, that when all *legal* methods for the redress of grievances have been tried in vain, then it is right for the oppressed to seek the redress of their wrongs by Revolution. Still, though this is a right of the down-trodden, yet it is always the ultimate right; and each case of attempted revolution is to be judged of by itself, receiving approval or condemnation, according to its character, from that principle of justice which is common to, at least, the better portion of mankind, and which is analogous to that other principle in Man, denominated, in both ordinary speech and philosophic terminology, “common sense.” The Fathers of our Republic recognized this principle. When, therefore, they were about to dissolve the “political bands,” which connected them with

*Bib. Sacra, Jan. No. 1855, Page 187.

the Mother Country, they said that "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind required that they should declare the *causes* which impelled them to the separation." Accordingly in the Declaration of Independence they set those causes forth. These, as they stand in that Instrument, mankind have had before them for nearly a century: men have formed their judgment upon them; and I have no hesitancy in asserting, that the better "opinions of mankind" have always approved, and will always approve them. The justifications of the American Revolution I shall leave, therefore, where the Framers of the Declaration of Independence left them, that is, with the judgment and conscience of universal humanity.

Nay, I go farther than this. I affirm that the American Revolution was a historical necessity, in virtue of its being an organic part of a plan which God had begun to develop on the shores of the New World; a plan having respect to the highest interests of the human race for the Ages, and the whole Kingdom of God on earth.

Do you ask me for the proof of such a plan? I judge it sufficient for a reply to appeal to the position which this Nation has held, and the function which it has fulfilled, in view of the nations and peoples of the earth, from the day of its acknowledged independence to the present hour. It has been, in all its history, as no other nation ever has been, the dread of tyrants and the hope of the friends of freedom. There have been Republics before: some have fallen, and some yet remain; but when the American Republic came into being, mankind felt that there was something *peculiar* in it: felt that a new element had come into human history; an element, which a deep and wide-spread presentiment seemed to tell them, would, sooner or later, work a vast change in the whole substance of that history.

Possibly some one may suggest, that if the Revolution were a necessity, then the *causes* which led to it were also

a necessity : thus freeing from all blame the restrictive and tyrannous policy of the Mother Country towards the Colonies. Does any one think this? I answer that if that policy was blameless, then all unjust government is blameless ; then all forms of sin are innocent ; then the crucifiers of our Lord were not culpable ;—but the case of the latter, as being innocent or blameworthy, has been settled by the inspired words of Peter. “ Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and with *wicked* hands have crucified and slain.”

There are no principles so operating in the Divine Government : there are no forces so working in human history, as to absolve either individuals or nations from the responsibility of their acts. Though we thus speak, we speak from no antipathy against our British parent ; for we entertain for her feelings of filial regard.

Standing now on these principles, I see, if I mistake not, the hand of God most palpably apparent, working through the human agencies of the American Revolution. I see it in providing the means of *incitement* to meet the crisis. What were these? And where were they found? Whatever may be the feeling in the hearts of a people, all popular movements need direction : all popular enthusiasm needs expression. There is at such times a demand for minds able to conceive its sentiments, and tongues eloquent to put forth its utterances, stirring, through their electric words, still more profoundly the depths of the popular heart. How was it, then, in our Revolutionary History in respect to this need? Divine Providence did not leave this want unmet ; and it was never better met. It was met in such men as James Otis and Patrick Henry, the impassioned and triumphant defenders of popular Rights, and emphatically the orators of incitement to the Revolution, stirring and nerving the people to brave the crisis of offered resistance to tyranny. It was met

in Samuel Adams and John Hancock, who, by the British authorities were declared to be outlaws. It was met in the Press, which sent forth its summons, conjuring the people to rise and battle for their rights. It was met in the Pulpit of the Revolution, which also uttered its voice; and its words resounded like a clarion blast throughout the land. It was met in the mothers, wives and sisters of the Revolution; for there were brave women in those days. Such were some of the men, for there were others of imperishable memory; and such were some of the influences in which were found the means of *incitement* to the struggle which won our National Independence.

The crisis was now at hand. In February, 1775, Parliament passed an Act, declaring that a rebellion existed in Massachusetts, and "that an additional force should be sent to Boston." Measures were hurried forward accordingly. With rash precipitancy, the authorities send a body of troops to seize on some military stores deposited at Concord. In the attempt to affect this, occurs the bloody tragedy at Lexington, and the war of the Revolution is already begun. Ethan Allen's magic capture of Ticonderoga, and the unresisting surrender of Crown Point two days afterward, inspirit the hearts and fix the determination of the patriots.

It is now time to inquire what means of *accomplishing* the work already begun by our fathers, did Divine Providence furnish. On the very day of Allen's capture of Ticonderoga, the Continental Congress commenced its second session at Philadelphia. One of the first objects of attention must, of course, be the appointment of a Commander-in-chief of the American forces. After a powerful speech, setting forth the qualities required in such a leader, John Adams concluded by nominating a man of their own body—"George Washington, of Virginia." The House were electrified, and none more so than the individ-

ual on whom all eyes were so suddenly turned. The next day he was elected. Self-distrustingly, though manfully, he obeyed his country's call ; and that country knows, and all the world knows, how well he justified those two days' transactions of Congress. Endowed from his birth with a well-formed and athletic frame, with a virtuous and noble character, with a high and fiery spirit, yet with matchless self-control, Divine Providence had, for years, been giving him special training for his work, while "surveying wild lands and running boundary lines in the woods of Virginia," and by the part which he was required to perform in the French and Indian war. I cannot but think that the hand of God was signally manifest, and in nothing more so than in giving us just such a man as our Washington ; so calm, so just, so firm, so wise to achieve our Independence ; a second Moses to lead our American tribes from the Egypt of Colonial bondage through the Red Sea and wilderness of the Revolutionary struggle, to the Canaan of liberty. It is not too much to say that, had he been a different man, in the slightest essential degree, with his slender and precarious resources, with powerful enemies to encounter, with secret plottings for his deposition from office on the part of ambitious and unworthy men desirous of his place, with his unpaid, half-starved, ill-clad and shoeless soldiery, and worse than all, with Toryism and desertion rampant on all sides, he would have failed, for he would doubtless have ventured his little all on some rash hazard, and the American cause would have been lost. We sometimes hear him unfavorably compared, in a military point of view, with Eugene, or Marlborough, or Napoleon, or Wellington, or some other great Commander ; but I must think that such comparisons proceed from a total misconception of his character. Washington, in an emphatic sense, was a historical man ; by that, I mean that he was a man prepared by Providence for a special end ; called

to perform a particular work, a work allowing him to be nothing other than just what he was. His destiny was not to dazzle or awe the world by august military achievements, sending down his name to the latest generations of men as a resistless conqueror, who might lead, like an Alexander or a Cæsar, in proud triumph at his chariot wheels, the captive Chieftains of subjugated nations, because, for such an end he must have had at his command their disciplined and embattled cohorts ; but it was to gain one simple, yet stupendous object, an achievement, in respect to its influence on the future of mankind, the most momentous in history ; it was, with the scanty resources furnished to his hands, and with fearful odds against him, to lay the foundations of this great American Republic. Washington was a man so exactly fitted for his work, that, being changed at all, he would have been unequal to his task. Whether he himself recognized a Divine Providence as working in our American affairs ; whether he regarded his country's cause as dependent upon that Providence, he would have told you, had you asked him on his coming from his knees in the forest seclusion, where he was accustomed to bow in prayer, while passing that dark winter at Valley Forge. I confess I have often been astonished that the spirit of the man did not break down ; that the internal supports of his hope, courage and patriotism did not give way. The more I have studied American history, the more I have become convinced that, even with those who read the story of the Revolution, there is but a faint appreciation of the difficulties by which our Leader was surrounded. His spirit must have sunk within him before the close of seven long years, but for a twofold cause : and that was the firm hold which he had upon first and highest principles, and the confidence which he felt in God as their supporter.

I must now proceed to say, that the same Providence which gave us Washington, gave us others also, who were worthy to be his brothers, if not his peers in the common cause of the country ; but whose heroic deeds we have not time to record. It gave us Warren and Ward, Schuyler and Putnam, Gates and Montgomery, with others their compeers in the service and remembrances of a grateful country. It gave us, too, the sympathy of many minds of Continental Europe, and of not a few even in England. It called to our aid a Lafayette, a Steuben, a Kosciusko, with other Europeans, whose memories the country will embalm in a deathless gratitude. It gave us also one more, who has not received the recognition which his merit deserves, and whom we would not fail to mention here, I mean Robert Morris, the Financier of the Revolution, who rendered services, which, in their different form, were hardly less needful to the success of the cause than those of Washington himself, who, when money was indispensable, and when the country had no credit on which to raise money, could raise it on his own. This field, however, so rich in materials for illustrating our theme, the lack of time obliges me to leave.

4. We recognize still another department of the illustration of God's peculiar Providential dealing with our people, in the *constitutional period* of our history.

Up to this era, God had conducted our fathers, illustrating our annals, at some points, by His marked interpositions, and, at all points, by obvious evidences of His peculiar care. To say nothing of the Trans-atlantic preparations for our history, God had been with the Pilgrims from the hour when they first struck foot on Plymouth rock, to that which witnessed the recognition of our National Independence. Had He forsaken them then, ill would it have fared with our infant Republic.

To discuss the interior principles of the Constitution, to explain the structure of our Government, to trace the line of its practical workings, and to compare it with other systems form no part of my design. My purpose is simply to verify, by a few brief references, the presence of God's hand, working in this later, as I cannot but think I have done, in the earlier stages of our history.

The struggles of the Revolution past; the boon of Independence won; a new epoch was to be entered upon, and it was one of vast moment. Failing here, all that had gone before would go for nothing. First of all, at the critical moment of the close of the Revolution, God had already provided for the security of the country in the matchless character of Washington; had he not so done, this Government would have been a Monarchy, and not a Republic. This is the sublimest moment in the life of the great patriot. Having fought her battles, he is now seen laying down his honors at his country's feet; and, nobler than a Cincinnatus, retiring to his home, when haply, like the Napoleons, he might have placed upon his brow, a crown. This was a solemn hour in the history of the country. The American cause needed men of far-sighted sagacity, of regulative talent, of constitutive ideas, of able statesmanship. It needed men of diplomatic abilities, those who would be faithful at home, and just abroad. It needed men of incorruptible patriotism, those who would fill the offices of Government, not in the interest of self, but in that of the country. How adequately God supplied the men to meet these demands, our constitutional history leaves us in no doubt.

Certain Articles of Confederation, thirteen in number, adopted in November, 1777, had formed, during the course of the war, all the Constitution of Government that was requisite. The war being closed, the new condition of the country demanded a greater centralization of pow-

er, and a more efficient mode of Governmental action. The old Articles of Confederation found inadequate, were thrown aside, and our present Constitution, originally framed by Gouverneur Morris, was submitted, in Sept. 1787, to the Continental Congress; copies of it were sent to the several States for ratification. How now was this Instrument received? Coming in conflict with extreme doctrines of State Sovereignty, it was violently opposed. Then were needed minds who could vindicate and support it; nor were they wanting; the men to meet this crisis were Madison, Hamilton and Jay. The result of their efforts was put forth in the *Federalist*, consisting of a series of political Papers, so fundamental in their principles, so clear in their reasonings, so masterly in their whole conception that European Statesmen have acknowledged their extraordinary value. To these remarkable writings the country is indebted, under God, in no small degree, for the ratification, by the several States, of the Constitution. The Constitution ratified, the offices of the Executive were to be filled, and the men, adapted to fill them, were not lacking, as the first Constitutional Cabinet will show. The National credit was sunk to its lowest depths, borne down by the mill-stone of a ponderous debt; Alexander Hamilton was called to the task of raising it, and he raised it. A National Judiciary was to be established, and that clear-headed jurist, John Jay, came to the Bench as the first Chief Justice. Our nascent Republic had been, and was to be, represented in European Courts; and there were such men as Franklin, Jefferson, Pinckney, Livingston and Adams, with others of like character and fame to do it. While we may not affirm that demagoguism has had no place in our national affairs, for we know that it has; while we may not say that political corruption has never appeared in the tactics of partyism, for we know to the contrary; yet our American Congress has never been left

without men, whose abilities have dignified its councils, and whose patriotism has made them watchful, that the Republic should receive no harm. History has recorded their names, and the country needs not the recital of them. These men, furnished by Providence, have gone forward devising, constituting and arranging, until they have produced for us the institutions, social, civil and political, which the God of our fathers, by means of them has handed down to us; and which, by us, and by those who shall come after us, may He convey to the most distant generations of posterity.

Such are some of the manifestations of God's hand in American history. Thus is our nation's story *full* of passages telling of the marked and peculiar manner in which that hand has wrought in the various stages of our national progress. It is no Minerva planting her olives in our virgin soil; it is no Neptune, striking his trident into the rock of an American Acropolis; it is no Æneas, escaping from a burning Troy, weathering the dire disasters sent by an angry Goddess, and setting, at last, his weary foot on these western shores; it is none of these, nor such as these, who may be honored as the founder of our glorious Republic. The genius of our country emerges not from the obscurity of misty legend; our history begins not in the wonders of lying fable, but its sources are found in God; and it is in the channels and under the guidance of His Providence, that, thus far, the stream of that history has flowed. There is, in this, no national vanity, seeking to dignify its annals, by claiming an illustrious origin; it is a truthful, a grateful, a religious, and an indispensable recognition.

To what other nation has God given such a history? To none. Then are we adequately conscious of, and adequately grateful for, the signal distinction which has been vouchsafed to us? Do we appreciate the peculiarities of our

past history and of our present condition? To learn the value of our advantages, we have only to compare our condition with that of *any* other people.

Other countries have lofty mountains and noble rivers, beautiful lakes, fertile fields and lovely landscapes, as well as we. They have too what we have not; they have antiquity; they have the places where the older history was transacted; where the infancy of the race was cradled; where Civilization, Art and Literature took their rise. They have Athens and Rome, with all the localities and monuments of classic times. They have the Pyramids, the Sphinxes and the Statue of Memnon. They have Thebes and Memphis, the plains on which the Pharaohs looked; the river, on whose sedgy banks an Egyptian damsel found the infant Moses; they have Babylon and Nineveh, and more still; they have Sinai and Calvary, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, the land once trod by the feet of the Saviour and his Apostles.

They have all these things; but what *else* do they have. They have Despotism watching, checking, restraining and oppressing them on every side: despotism in the State, and despotism in the Church; these two despotisms propping up each other, and crushing the people. They have expensive Courts, with all the gewgaws, the flourish and the foolery of Royalty to maintain. They have not only the ruling personages *themselves* to sustain, but their relatives to an indefinite number, even "to the third and fourth generation," a class who *do nothing*, except to eat up the substance of the people, whom they look down upon as an order of beings lower than themselves. They have standing armies to support in order to keep themselves in subjection: they have, I mean the *masses*, what seems to me scarcely better than an utter helplessness, in respect to all the true prospects of this life. *This* is what they have in most other countries.

However hoary then may be their antiquity : however interesting their historical associations : however rich their collections of Art : while we do not disesteem these disadvantages, shall we not more highly prize, and as firmly as possible hold, the invaluable gifts which God, in the development of His purposes respecting us as a people, has bestowed upon us. Our rulers are the men of our own election ; and when they displease us, we can depose them, or, at the expiration of their terms, we can elect others ; and our religion is that of our own choice. The Institutions of Learning also, hand in hand with those of Liberty and Religion, are scattering their blessings, either more or less, over every hill and valley in our land, extending the advantages of Education even to the humblest. We have no titled aristocracy, as they have almost everywhere in the old world, separating, by the mere accident of birth, the rich from the poor, the high from the low ; but with the blessing of God upon industry and virtue, the lowliest son of poverty may rise to stations of the highest honor and usefulness. It is such results as *these* that, God's Providence working in our history, has wrought out for us. Fellow citizens, do we rightly understand and appreciate these our National advantages ? Do we fully and seriously apprehend, too, our *mission* as a people ? God has not given us a history so peculiar without having in it an *end* in view : without having assigned to us *duties* which we must perform, and without having marked out for us a destiny which we must fulfill. Our advantages, then, have been bestowed with *reference* to those duties, and that destiny. Our mission is to shew the world, the whole world, and on the grandest scale, the capacity of the people—the *masses* of the people—for self-government ; the compatibility and coexistence of freedom with order ; for freedom is not lawlessness, but the exercise of the human faculties, according to the principles of right and justice. Our mission is to

shew that Christianity, with respect to its organic structure, is not to exist in the form of a State Church,—the State holding up the Church as the oak does the vine: it is to shew a free State and a free Church. Our mission is to exhibit the results of general Education upon a great and free people; to give to humanity scope and place for culture and progress, and to present to the world, in herself, a realization and example of that culture and progress. In a word, it is to give to the world the theory and practice of constitutional and religious Freedom. That such a mission is for the world a most momentous one: that every true American citizen will seek, by all the means in his power, to secure the unchecked, the unaltered, the progressive and the perpetual development of a history which has been so auspiciously advanced to its present stage, and which, in its unchanged progress, is essential to the fulfillment of that mission, I need not pause to show.

II. I come now, in the second place, to consider the bearings of the subject thus far discussed, upon the present historical crisis of the country.

1. I have spoken of the historic preparations by Providence for our national Life: of our broad Land and compact Nationality: of the hand of God as traced in our subsequent career: of our constitutional organization, and of the objects and ends of our American Republic. The Colonial and Revolutionary struggles were now ended: the processes of the Federal organization were completed: a recognition by European and foreign Powers was gained, and a national credit was established. The nation had a being, and stood forth before the world. Those who had framed and organized it saw the work of their hands, and as they looked upon it, might have borrowed, without irreverence, the words of Deity at the close of Creation, and pronounced it, as in *their* view, "*very good.*" The Ship of State was launched; Washington was placed at

the helm, and she spread her canvas upon the broad sea of the future. Still, however complete her model; however excellent her construction; however noble her bearing, there was one *leak* in the hull of the Republic; though we are happy to believe that it is the only *serious* one, which the most thorough overhauling has ever detected. There was one rotten timber in her keel, and that was *Slavery*; but yet, as without it there would be a lack of materials, it was wrought into the structure, though with much perplexity as to the way of laying it, and with some misgivings as to the result. Jefferson and Madison uttered words of warning. Still they hoped for the best: they hoped that instead of increasing, the danger would diminish. Time rolled on: but instead of its diminution and cessation there has been an augmentation and a strengthening of the evil. The Slave Power, instead of diminishing and disappearing, as the founders of the Republic anticipated, has expanded in every dimension of census, interest, opinion and impudence, till it has precipitated upon the country the crisis of to-day. And now what is that crisis? That unsound and dangerous spot, always in the ship's hull, has opened in a mighty bilge, and is letting in upon us the turbid and disastrous waters of rebellion. A dozen, either more or less, of once loyal States are, to-day, in armed revolt against the Government of the Union, seeking, by fire and sword, its overthrow, and the establishment of Slavedom upon its ruins.

Nor have these rebels done their work secretly. They have not whispered treason merely in the private ears of a few accomplices and confidential conspirators; but they have uttered it in the streets of the Capital and the halls of Congress. They have not spoken it merely in secret, but they have declared it upon the house-top: they have not merely skulked about under cover of the night, but they have stalked abroad at noon-day: they have viola-

ted the most solemn oaths: they have declared the ordinances of revolt: they have stolen the Government's money: they have robbed its Arsenals: they have seized its Forts: they have attacked its soldiers and defenders: they have opened and are prosecuting civil war, with circumstances of unheard-of perfidy, atrocity and barbarism.

Now what do they intend in all this? It is to make slavery coextensive with the country: to remove its metes, bounds and hindrances: to give it unrestricted scope and enduring perpetuity; it is to gratify the ambition of a set of conscienceless demagogues, reared in the lap of oppression, who, when they can no longer rule, are determined to ruin: who, taking the people by the head have run them into the abyss of rebellion.

And what were the expectations with which the conspirators entered upon their work? They had the atrocious presumption, the measureless audacity to suppose that, with what strength they have of their own, and with what help would be supplied by northern treason, they could crush down all opposition: take the Government bodily, and reconstruct it on their own principles, looking to the vaults in Wall Street and State Street to pay the bills. And what are the means by which these men are seeking to accomplish their end? It is by lying, by theft, by murder, by conscription, by intensifying the hatred of the Southern people against the National Government, whose objects they designedly misrepresent. Such are the aims, the hopes and the means of this gigantic rebellion, with which the conspiracy of Cataline is not to be compared.

Was there nothing in the sacredness of our national history to challenge their reverential regard? Was there nothing in the signal dealings of God's Providence with us, as a nation, which we have already traced, and which

stamp their inviolable seal upon our national character, to restrain them from such a mad and nefarious course? Was there nothing in the objects and ends as we have pointed them out, for which that Providence planned, and thus far has wrought out our history to be to them an influence and a motive of refrain? Was there nothing in the labors performed, in the sacrifices rendered, in the sufferings endured, in the blood spilt by the fathers, to arouse their patriotism? Was there nothing in the sanctity of old associations and the ties of national brotherhood to attach them to their country? Was there nothing in the echoes of Hanover Court House? nothing from the graves of De Kalb and Pulaski? nothing in the shades of Monticello and Mount Vernon, to deter them from this atrocious conspiracy? Was there nothing in the memory of Eutaw Springs and the Cowpens? nothing in the heroic deeds of Jasper, Moultrie and Sumpter to prevent them from firing upon their country's flag, and cannonading the fort that bears the patriot's name? No. Nothing! Nothing! That priceless, that paramount interest of *slavery* is at stake; and all ties, all obligations, all principles, all interests are as *nothing* before it; are as ropes of sand and as flax in the fire.

Wesley pronounced slavery to be "the sum of all villainies." The definition is pungent and complete. We have always believed it true, but never so cordially, so deeply, so entirely as to-day. For slavery alone, its advocates and propagandists are ready to give up or destroy everything beside. For this one thing, and that the worst and most infernal of all things, since all sins and all wrongs, oppression, adultery, rebellion and murder, are potentially wrapped up with it, and reside within it; they are ready to sacrifice everything—their country's Government, its history, its hopes, its destiny, its glory, with the prospects and interests of freedom and religion for the world. For

this one thing, in a sacrament of blood and death, they pledge "their lives, their fortunes," and would their "sacred honor," if they *had* any to pledge. They are demolishing the southern wall of the Temple of Freedom, and with its fragments, they are attempting to lay the foundations of despotism. Against law, against duty, against precedent, against the sense of all mankind beside, they have inaugurated a Slave Confederacy on the soil won from tyranny by the toils and blood of the fathers, and consecrated to liberty. They have told the world that its *Corner-stone* is slavery ; they need not have specified any *particular* part as being that thing, for slavery is the top, bottom and sides of the whole concern.

Thus there is an attempt to found, on southern soil, and in the very bosom of this American Republic, the Empire of slavery, while all the world beside is tending towards liberty ; while Alexander, of Russia, is emancipating his serfs ; while Joseph, of Austria, is promising constitutional guarantees to his Hungarian subjects ; while Poland and Italy are striving for independent nationalities ; while all Europe is looking towards freer Governments and freer Institutions.

Are we told, however, in apology for their iniquitous proceeding, that the social and political ideas of the age, will, in a short time, veer round to be upon their side ; that, though the tendency toward freedom is just *now* the course of the world, in a decade it will turn back again to its old ruts ? For six thousand years it has been turned toward despotism ; now, that it is heading the other way, we think, that for a while, it will *stay* so headed.

Shall we be referred for another justification of their rebellion, to the exasperations which, it is alleged, that the South has received from the free-speaking and fanaticism of the North ? It is true we have spoken with some free-

dom because we could not alter our consciences, because we could not prevent our thoughts, because we could not altogether repress them; but as for the *fanaticism* of the North, except in the case of the forray of John Brown, approved by almost nobody, it has been the spirit of absolute quiescence compared with the barbarous fanaticism of the South, whose weapons are not words, but cudgels and bowie knives, pistols and halters.

As for the Government, meanwhile, what has it not done to appease the Moloch of slavery? It has twisted and turned; it has bowed itself down; it has eaten dirt; it has done everything it could do, in reason and out of reason, to propitiate this great demon of the South. It has framed no Congressional bill, that has not been squared and adjusted to the demands and interests of slavery. It has given its offices and emoluments in disproportion to Southerners, who have been too proud and too lazy to work, and they have paid back the Government by treason and rebellion.

Where now are the justifications of this transcendent villainy? They are nowhere! A declaration of independence, setting forth the *causes* which have influenced them to this course, drawn up in the form of that drafted by our fathers, would be a note-worthy document to come before the world. "The opinions of mankind" would scout it from civilized society. Out of Cottondom there is not a throne of despotism on earth half wicked enough to put forth the sentiments which such a Manifesto would contain. Though without the shadow of a justification, they have, nevertheless, rushed onward to their dreadful work, which, if they are permitted to accomplish, will cut short, at once and forever, the course of American history.

2. How now was the first scene in this bloody drama opened? The Government are essaying to supply with provisions, a handful of half-starved men in one of its own

forts; that fort is assaulted and fired, and the American flag is struck to the ground. I believe that the *end* of the drama thus opened, God will take under his *own* control. I believe that, in this case, as always, the wrath of man shall praise Him, and any remainder, *over and above* what would subserve that end, I believe He will restrain. Be assured of this, that the same Providence, so many traces of which we find in all our country's past, is presiding also over the events of this stormy hour. The God of our history permits, indeed, this work to go on; but know of a truth, He does not permit it without an *object* in view.

I believe that one intent of the permission is, to make the insane fury of the perpetrators of this horrid wrong, the *means of their own punishment*, thereby to instruct mankind, in a great principle of God's Providential discipline of nations. In such a plan, He is only repeating a course which he has not unfrequently pursued in the history of States. Thus was it in the case of the Egyptians, whom God submerged in the Red Sea. For a long time the southern people have been strengthening the fetters of oppression; for a long time they have been forming themselves to a semi-barbarian type of character, carrying habitually with them weapons of death, and ready, at the slightest misunderstanding or affront, to get up a duel. For a long time, the slaveholder has been wont to despise our Northern people, most of whom Divine Providence has obliged to work for a living, while he *takes* his out of the labor of slaves,—forcibly, if not voluntarily rendered, and *paid* only as a man pays his horse, by giving him food and shelter that he may not become unable to work. They have opprobriously spoken of *us* as forming the "*mudsills*" of society: perhaps we do; but if so, *they* form its *cockloft*; and we submit, whether it *looks* well for the cockloft of society to boast itself so over the mudsills! These obnoxious

ideas, these offensive taunts, and the form of character that is the source from which they spring, are the baleful and inevitable result of the unnatural, wicked and corrupting constitution of society among them. Is the Lord going to suffer such pride, such oppression, such guilt, such madness, as are now theirs, to escape unpunished? It is worse than idle to expect it. We may not close our eyes to the teachings of God's Providence in History, which are the same with those of His Word. Surely He will make their own wicked rage and demented foolhardiness, if they persevere in the attempt to sunder the Republic, the *means* of their chastisement, if not of their destruction. It is to be hoped that through this fearful judgment, which by their folly and sin they have pulled down upon their own heads, they will "learn righteousness;" but however this may be, there can be no doubt that God intends, by means of this awful condition into which their own guilty conduct has plunged them, that at least the inhabitants of the world shall "learn righteousness." He will teach the nations the doom of oppressors, which, by their stolidity, by their rashness, by their infatuation, they prepare for themselves. He will teach them a lesson which history illustrates, but which they are prone to forget, that there is a *stage*, sometimes reached, in the career of the oppressor, in which, besotted by his fatuity, and drunk with the wine of his madness, he prepares his own winding-sheet, digs his own grave, plunges into it; and mankind have only to close his funeral by heaping upon him the dirt of disgrace, contempt and abhorrence, which his deeds of darkness have merited.

If we mistake not, by this awful crisis in our nation's history, Divine Providence would teach *us*, too some lessons. With our immense expansion, with the rapid increase of wealth, the great mass of our people have grown intensely sordid and material in character; amassing money, or trying to amass it, only to hoard it up with a miserly close-

fistedness, or to expend it in a proud, profligate and luxurious extravagance, hardly recognizing, unless it is by virtual compulsion, that there are any objects in the philanthropic, the intellectual, the moral and the religious interests of the world, for which property is given, and to which it must be applied. In the awful exigency which has come upon us, God has broken into the safes of this iron selfishness: He has untied a million purse-strings, not only the loosely-drawn, but the hard-knotted, by showing the people that there are interests more valuable than money: more valuable than even individual life. The patriotic patience with which multitudes of business men have suffered and are suffering intense, and even ruinous pecuniary pressure, coming down unrepiningly from affluence to penury, is a phenomenon of this great crisis, to me hardly less impressive than the readiness with which thousands have rushed to arms, perilling their lives for the rescue of their country. God would show our people that great principles can be maintained only at the cost of great sacrifices. He, himself has made them; so must we. In these days of official theft, of wholesale defalcations, of general time-serving, the support of principle by sacrifice has with many almost died out from the small crop of even their traditional virtues. To a great extent our people are living as though this life is everything; and duty, principle, eternity nothing. By this great crisis in our history may God teach us a different lesson.

Nor is this all: if my judgment does not mislead me, He would shew us likewise some of the *ripe* fruit of the doctrines of latitudinarianism and non-coercion, so widely sown within a few years past; and which are rapidly going to seed in almost every department of our moral life, in a weakened and vitiated sense of the sanctions of duty. The basis of a

deep, strong and noble character, whether individual or national, is never laid, except under the regimen of a wholesome moral discipline. Parents who are bringing up untrained offspring are heaping together the firebrands of Revolution; and that Government which is feebly administered with respect to the treatment of crime, is destined to fall to pieces, relaxing at every joint through sheer corruption. Such a Government may be progressive; but it is down a steep hill to its own destruction: it is going where Greece and Rome went, and by the same road. Then may this crisis be the means of reinstating that principle which, in our people, has become dangerously unsettled, but which is the foundation of all high and sound character—loyalty to law, human and Divine. Let this be, and all shall be well. Let the country be true to herself, and true to her glorious history, in all that it involves for the good of humanity and the glory of God; let her give all traitors and rebels to understand, that she has for them but a few very simple articles, namely, bullets and bayonets, ropes and gibbets, for the magistrate may not bear the sword in vain, then will there be hereafter for that class of citizens but slender encouragement; then will the Government come forth from the struggle purer and stronger, both in itself and in view of the world, than before the experience of this fiery probation.

What now, I ask, shall we do? The hour is a solemn one—the most momentous in the country's history. Asking God, on whom we depend, in the language of Dr. Wayland, "to issue this awful exigency in the glory of His Son;" entreating Him to give to all our citizens virtue and patriotism, and especially to our rulers and legislators wisdom to know their duty, and courage to do it; and thanking

Him meanwhile for the wonderful degree of these great qualities already exhibited by them, what, I again ask, shall we do? Shall we give up our national history, and look upon its last chapter as ending here? Shall we contemplate the hand of God as working in such a wonderful manner in our historical career, only to close up, in an abrupt collapse, a violent frustration of all its apparent plans and purposes? Shall this greatest and best realization of Republican Freedom which the world has ever seen, be ruthlessly destroyed? Shall we disappoint the expectation of myriads who are suffering under oppression, and who are looking to our shores for the great hope and true home of down-trodden Liberty in all lands? Patriotism, Freedom and Religion answer No! Shall we sleep in torpid supineness until we are awakened by the iron heel of the despot upon our necks? Shall we permit the slave master to call his sable menials under the shadow of Bunker Hill Monument, as he has said that he *will* do? The true sons of sires who served their country on Bemis' and Bunker's heights, on Erie and Champlain, answer No! The heroes of Lundy's Lane and Fort Sumpter, answer No! What! shall that traitorous Palmetto flag, the vile emblem of Slavery, ever float over the Granite hills and the Green Mountains of New England: on the banks of the Hudson, and from the summits of the Adirondacks? Shall it be raised in the Metropolis of the Empire State, and surmount the Keystone of the Federal Arch? Shall it be unfurled on the breezy prairies of the Northwest, and by the leaping waters of Niagara? No! An echo starting from the headlands of Maine, reverberated across a Continent and dying away on the waves of the Pacific, answers No! The flag of the Union shall ever, as now, wave over them all; and not only so, but the National Motto shall be "the Stars and Stripes on every flag-staff from Maine to Texas."

Do these men, however, begin to show signs of readiness to *retreat* from their purpose of Northern subjugation? Do they not tell us that they only want to be "*let alone*?" Do they not know that the thief, the adulterer, the highwayman, and the murderer, only want the same thing? Do they not know that the "let-alone" doctrine is specially held at Charlestown, Sing-Sing, Auburn and Dannemora? What! are they to be *allowed* to break up this Government? Are they to be allowed to terminate the line of American history? If so, then having in our hands the *means* to prevent it, we are, with respect to our allegiance to God, as well as the spirit, the principles and ends of our History, blacker traitors than they. If this Government is overthrown or rent in twain, then the hopes of the world for popular Institutions are at an end. The boding auguries of European Absolutists are fulfilled. We number ourselves with Mexico and the wretched States of Central and South America, whose very name is a by-word, a reproach and a poison to Freedom.

Must we be told, however, that the Theory of our Government so differs from that of absolute ones, that the rebels must be treated in a correspondingly different manner? in other words, that coercion cannot be applied. Governments may fail practically, as they not unfrequently have failed; but where before has there ever been a Government which had the principle of its destruction, systematically wrought into its very theory? Nowhere. Must we hear more, too, of the doctrine of "peaceable secession,"* as for months it has been put forth from tongue and pen, demoralizing the public conscience, and blinding it to the turpitude of this atrocious rebellion. It is the greatest political heresy

* See the address delivered by the Hon. Edward Everett in New York, July 4th, 1861. in which the whole question is treated in a manner which elsewhere we have not seen equalled.

that was ever promulgated, for if on this principle the country may be divided into halves, then on the same principle it may be divided into much smaller factions.

Or again, is a vile compromise to be made with the Government by the rebels,—they coming to offer its self-dictated terms with one hand, while the weapons of threatened revolt and destruction are in the other? No; let them lay down their rebel arms, and become again loyal citizens, before they venture into the presence of their injured country. Let them do this, or let the country go steadily onward to their subjugation. Otherwise let us not hereafter speak of the American Government, unless it be as recalling with sadness the story of what it once was; for it exists no longer. It has sunk out of history into the mire of a fathomless debasement: it has perished in the void of absolute nothingness; and that vile thing *calling* itself Government, which remains in its place, I will pray for power to loathe more and more as long as I breathe this vital air. Troy was; but is no longer. The hopes of the millions, of other continents, struggling for freedom—civil, political and religious—and looking to this land to behold the prospects and read the promises of the future, are stricken from the earth. Long have despots tried to prove that popular Governments are *no* Governments. They never doubted that the American Republic is strong enough for *external* purposes; the question has ever been and is, whether it will prove itself adequate to *internal* ones. Let the Government compromise with armed rebels, and the question is settled. A hundred fold better would it be, with respect to the interests of freedom, that the country should go into this struggle and *fail*, if such an event were possible, than that it should shrink from meeting the crisis; European powers would have for

us, in the former case, a remaining respect, for they have had similar experiences; but in the latter, none.

Why, however, do we add argument to argument? Looking once for all to the historical Homestead of this great people, nothing can be plainer, than that it never was intended for two hostile nations: before it can be thus occupied, God must reconstruct the continent, cutting to the ocean, as an outlet for the great Northwest, a river running on Mason's and Dixon's line.

Then let the country stand firm. Let all her citizens see the question as standing heaven-high above all mere party issues: let all patriots, the lovers of Freedom and the lovers of their race surround her standard, and whether they come from the field or the shop, from the marts of Commerce, the halls of Science, or the Sanctuaries of Religion; let them maintain her cause. And do thou, O! God of our Fathers, if it may be, bring these men to a better mind and a better purpose, that they may restore their allegiance to Thyself, and to this most beneficent of human Governments; but if it may not be, that they will lay down their bloody arms, and come into the line of Thy great purposes of History, regarding Thy glory, and the good of mankind, through this once happy people, then do Thou, blast with the breath of Thy nostrils, their infernal designs, scattering them to the winds of Heaven; and let the curse of Meroz, scathing with the fires of Perdition, fall upon that man, or that class of men, whoever they may be, whether from the South or the North, from the East or the West, who shall lift the hand for the overthrow, or the rupture of this *God-founded* Republic.

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